

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

July 26, 2000

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

SUBJECT:           Renewing the Commitment to Ensure that Federal Programs  
                    are Free from Disability-Based Discrimination

On the 10th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), we have much to celebrate. This landmark civil rights law has increased opportunities for employment, education, and leisure for millions of Americans. Our country is stronger as a result.

As we celebrate the ADA, we cannot forget that it was built on the solid foundation of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Act) (29 U.S.C. 701 et seq.), as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in Federal programs and activities. One important goal of the Act for the Federal Government is to set an example for the rest of the country by being a model employer and providing exemplary service to its customers with disabilities. While this goal remains constant, the nature and structure of government have changed in the decades since the inception of the Act. New agencies have been formed, while others no longer exist. Government is more efficient and doing more with less.

The time has come to reaffirm the Federal Government's commitment to ensuring that agencies' programs are free from discrimination. The means we use to accomplish our goals should be tailored to the changing nature of government.

I call upon the Department of Justice (DOJ), the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the Interagency Disability Coordinating Council (IDCC), and the National Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities (Task Force) to provide leadership to Federal agencies in meeting their common goal: to ensure that today's Federal programs, including programs of employment, continue to be readily accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities.

To meet this goal, I hereby direct the DOJ and the EEOC, in close consultation with the IDCC and the Task Force, to develop priorities under which agencies will focus on specific programs or types of programs to ensure that they are readily accessible to persons with disabilities in accordance with the requirements of sections 501, 504, and 508 of the Act (29 U.S.C. 791, 794, 794d). As the initial steps, agencies are directed to do the following:

- (a) Make all programs offered on their Internet and Intranet sites accessible to people with disabilities by July 27, 2001, consistent with the requirements of the Act and subject to the availability of appropriations and technology; and

(b) Publish by various means, including by incorporation on all agency Internet home pages, the name and contact information for the office(s) responsible for coordinating the agency's compliance with sections 501 and 504 of the Act (29 U.S.C. 791, 794).

I direct the IDCC to coordinate executive agencies' efforts to make the Federal Government's electronic and information technology accessible to persons with disabilities.

I designate the Administrator of General Services and the Secretary of Defense to participate in the IDCC, in addition to those members set out by statute (29 U.S.C. 794c).

These steps will enable Federal agencies to work together as they renew their ongoing commitment to ensure that Federal programs do not discriminate against people on the basis of disability.

Nothing in this memorandum is intended in any way to limit the effect or mandate of Executive Order 12250 of November 2, 1980, which conveys certain authorities upon the Attorney General, or Executive Order 12067 of June 30, 1978, which conveys certain authorities upon the Chair of the EEOC.

This memorandum is for the internal management of the executive branch and does not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable by a party against the United States, its agencies or instrumentalities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

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